Labour Market and
Economic Indicators Dashboard

Construction Industry

2006

Building and Educating
Tomorrow's Workforce

Alberta

2007-03911/

Introduction

By March 2006, 34 of 53 occupational groups tracked by the Alberta government showed an unemployment rate of three per cent or less, indicating skill and labour shortages. This document presents a series of economic indicators to identify labour and skill shortages or surpluses in industry sectors.

Indicators such as the unemployment rate, vacancy rate, hiring difficulty rate and demand-supply ratio[1] are used to determine the presence of shortages or surpluses now and in the future. This tool should not be used to make decisions. Instead, the intent of this dashboard is to spark discussion and give a snapshot of where the occupational cluster is likely to be within the next 10 year period. Additional provincial labour market information, including regional information, can be obtained at www.hre.gov.ab.ca/lmi to assist with decision making.

What is a shortage?

Shortages were determined by looking at the unemployment, vacancy, and hiring difficulty rates, as well as the demand-supply ratio for a number of occupational clusters within sectors. Occupations are sorted by industry sector as outlined in Appendix A.

This booklet uses a traffic light system to help define shortages, based on the following:

Unemployment: If the unemployment rate of an occupation is less than three per cent, there is a shortage.

Vacant jobs: If the vacancy rate of an occupation is more than two per cent, there is a shortage.

Hiring difficulty: If the hiring difficulty rate of an occupation is more than 25 per cent, there is a shortage.

Demand and supply of workers: A demand-supply ratio of greater than one indicates a supply shortage while a ratio of less than one indicates a supply surplus.

Occupational clusters are coded red, yellow or green based on the following:[2]

Red – All indicators show shortage OR the vacancy rate is over five per cent and the reported hiring difficulty over 40 per cent.

Yellow – One or more indicators show shortage.

Green – All indictors show a surplus.

[1] See Appendix B for more information about the unemployment rate, vacancy rate, hiring difficulty rate and/or demand-supply ratio.

[2] See Appendix C for more detailed information on the colour coding for each occupation.

Construction

The construction industry includes establishments that construct, repair or renovate residential buildings, business and commercial buildings, engineering works, and places that subdivide and develop land.[1]

Industry Challenges and Issues

While the construction industry has grown, the robust housing market and large investments in construction projects by the energy sector is already causing some shortages in skilled workers. This shortage is felt particularly during peak periods and could be more acute in the future. Key trades experiencing or expecting shortages include carpenters, plumbers, masonry and plastering trades.

Other factors that contribute to the labour challenges faced by the construction industry include:

- the typical boom and bust nature of the construction industry
- a reluctance on the part of many construction workers to work in camp conditions
- the aging of Alberta's skilled construction workforce
- the difficulty in attracting large numbers of workers from elsewhere in Canada

Occupational Cluster	2003[2]	2005	2015
Administrative and Regulatory Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Administrative Services Managers	Concern	Concern	Surplus

[1] This information is based on Government of Canada statistics and projections for the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) major group 23.

[2] The rationale for using 2003, 2005, and 2015 as years to show trend is indicated in Appendix D.

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Administrative Support Clerks	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Architects, Urban Planners and Land Surveyors	Shortage	Shortage	Shortage
Auditors, Accountants and Investment Professionals	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Automotive Service Technicians	Shortage	Shortage	Shortage
Carpenters and Cabinetmakers	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Chemical Engineers	Concern	Shortage	Shortage
Cleaners	Surplus	Concern	Surplus

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Clerical Occupations, General Office Skills	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Clerical Supervisors	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Computer and Information Systems Professionals	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Contractors and Supervisors, Trades and Related Workers	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Crane Operators, Drillers and Blasters	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Electrical Trades and Telecommunication Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Finance and Insurance Administrative Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Heavy Equipment Operators	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Human Resources and Business Service Professionals	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Legislators and Senior Management	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Library, Correspondence and Related Information Clerks	Surplus	Concern	Shortage
Machine Operators and Related Workers in Metal and Mineral Products Processing	Concern	Shortage	Surplus
Machinery and Transportation Equipment Mechanics (except Motor Vehicle)	Shortage	Shortage	Shortage
Machining, Metalworking, Woodworking and Related Machine Operators	Concern	Concern	Shortage

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Mail and Message Distribution Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Managers in Communication (except Broadcasting)	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Managers in Construction and Transportation	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Managers in Engineering, Architecture, Science Information Systems	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Managers in Financial and Business Services	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Managers in Protective Service	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Masonry and Plastering Trades	Shortage	Shortage	Shortage

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Metal Forming, Shaping and Erecting Trades	Concern	Shortage	Shortage
Motor Vehicle and Transit Drivers	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Office Equipment Operators	Surplus	Concern	Shortage
Plumbers, Pipe Fitters and Gas Fitters	Concern	Shortage	Shortage
Policy and Program Officers, Researchers and Consultants	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Printing Press Operators, Commercial Divers and Other Trades and Related Occupations, Not Elsewhere Classified	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Public Works and Other Labourers, Not Elsewhere Classified	Concern	Surplus	Surplus

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Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Recording, Scheduling and Distributing Occupations	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Sales and Service Supervisors	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Sales, Marketing and Advertising Managers	Concern	Concern	Surplus
Secretaries, Recorders and Transcriptionists	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Technical Occupations in Architecture, Drafting, Surveying and Mapping	Surplus	Shortage	Shortage
Technical Occupations in Civil, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering	Surplus	Concern	Shortage
Technical Occupations in Computer and Information Systems	Surplus	Concern	Surplus

Occupational Cluster	2003	2005	2015
Trades Helpers and Labourers	Surplus	Concern	Surplus
Transportation Officers and Controllers	Concern	Concern	Shortage
Writing, Translating and Public Relations Professionals	Concern	Concern	Surplus